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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 29, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHARLES J. FLEISCHMANN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING RETIRED MAJOR GENERAL GUS HARGETT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DESJARLAIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor retired Major General Gus Hargett, a staunch advocate for the National Guard and one of the most widely respected Tennesseans I have ever had the pleasure of knowing.

After more than 6 years as president of the National Guard Association for the United States, Gus will be stepping down next month. In all, he has more than 47 years of military service.

He enlisted in the Tennessee Army National Guard in 1962 as an infantry soldier and served in a variety of staff and leadership positions in his home State, in the Pentagon, and overseas. During Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, he was chief of operations and exercises at the National Guard Bureau in Arlington, Virginia.

Prior to his retirement from the military, Hargett served as the Tennessee Adjutant General. Since his appointment to association president in 2010, Gus has led the association's day-to-day operations in Washington, D.C., and has worked tirelessly on behalf of guardsmen across the globe by advocating for and spearheading groundbreaking legislative achievements.

Among his most memorable and significant accomplishments was his work adding the National Guard Bureau Chief to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Throughout his career, he has committed himself to promoting the National Guard and improving the overall quality of life for our Nation's soldiers in harm's way.

I want to take this moment to thank Major General Gus Hargett for his years of service to our country and for his tireless work on behalf of our Nation's guardsmen and their families.

REPEATING THE WORDS OF PRESIDENT TRUMP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Subcommittee on Immigration, the chairman, the gentleman from Wisconsin, attempted to reprimand me by reminding me that House rules prevent Members from "casting aspersions on the President of the United States." And what did I say to get this reprimand? I said that the President of the United States had said

that Mexicans were criminals and rapists.

Well, as the sportscasters used to say, let's go to the videotape. Almost the first words out of Donald Trump's mouth when he descended the golden escalators to launch his Presidential campaign were this:

When Mexico sends its people, they are not sending their best. They are bringing drugs. They are bringing crime. They are rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.

Well, I left out that part about some, I assume, are good people.

But the chairman of the committee said I was not following House rules because I was casting aspersions on the President because, apparently, I was saying what the President, himself, had actually said. And if that was offensive to the chairman, I agree. It is offensive. That was the point of making the speech.

So is repeating the words of the President against House rules? And if so, why? Because they are hateful and ugly things to say about our fellow human beings?

I don't think we should be barred from repeating the words of the President because they are hateful and ugly things to say about our fellow human beings, because he said them, and he is the President, and I respect the office.

So maybe it has to be something else. Maybe we cannot say things the President has said because it is not appropriate to say some of the things he has said about people, like the dehumanizing language he uses when describing which body parts he can grab women by, for example.

Now, Mr. Speaker, rather than saying, as I said earlier, let's go to the videotape, I think every single American has seen that videotape. When I have discussed the President saying these awful, hurtful things about where he can grab women, either here on the floor or on the Judiciary Committee, I

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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have actually had to clean up the language so it is safe for daytime C-SPAN audiences.

So what is it about repeating the words of this particular President in the U.S. House of Representatives that the gentleman from Wisconsin feels is a violation of the rule?

Maybe it is the lies. I looked through the House rules, and I didn't see any section that said, Members, thou shalt not lie. No, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't in the House rules. But, clearly, repeating things that this President said means that you will be repeating lies, and it just goes with the territory.

There was the original lie as President, barely a few hours in office, saying that his crowd was the largest crowd in the history of Presidential inaugurations.

Then there was the one about the Muslim ban, which the President said was a Muslim ban; his key adviser, the former mayor of New York, said was a Muslim ban; his other key adviser, Stephen Miller, said was a Muslim ban; but which the White House tried to say was not, in fact, a Muslim ban because it didn't ban all Muslims.

Several Federal courts have agreed with the President that what he ordered was a Muslim ban and disagreed with the President's lawyer saying that it was not a Muslim ban.

But what about when the President said that he saw American Muslims celebrating in New Jersey on 9/11? We know that was a lie. Or that 3 million illegal votes were cast on election day, causing the President to lose the popular vote, which he had walked back from the claim originally that 3 million undocumented immigrants had voted on election day? In either case, it was a lie.

Then there is the illegal wiretapping ordered by the previous President of the United States, President Obama, on President-elect Trump, which certainly looks like a lie at this point.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am starting to wonder if repeating a lie that the President has told the American people is against the House rules. Or maybe it is accusing the President of lying that is, in the words of the subcommittee chairman, casting aspersions.

But let's take a look. Here is the definition of the verb "lie" from Webster's Dictionary: "to make an untrue statement with the intent to deceive; to create a false or misleading impression."

By those definitions, I would say I am on pretty solid ground, from a factual standpoint, that the President of the United States has told lies.

Water is wet, dogs have four legs, and President Trump tells lies. There may be exceptions, but basically all three are truthful statements.

Unless we are outlawing the truth in Congress, I think that pointing out lies by our President is not only within the rules, it is our moral obligation and duty as elected leaders of a free nation to point them out.

So then I am left to wonder, "What is it about repeating the President's

words that so upset the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Wisconsin?" and I figured it out. It is upsetting to Republican Members of the House to hear the words of the President of the United States because they know they have to defend them as the leader of their party, and I can understand why that would make any human being very uncomfortable.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The gentleman from Illinois is reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

RECOGNIZING MEDAL OF HONOR DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday the Nation celebrated Medal of Honor Day. This rarely celebrated holiday was designated by Congress in 1990 but only officially observed once, on March 25, 1991. I was pleased to see our most decorated war heroes honored last Friday during a ceremony at the White House.

The Medal of Honor is the highest military honor our Nation can bestow. According to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, there have been 3,498 recipients, and 75 of those individuals are still living today.

Just last year, I was able to recognize one of Pennsylvania's very own Medal of Honor recipients, late Army Specialist Ross McGinnis. I assisted in naming a post office in Knox, Clarion County, for Specialist McGinnis, who died in December 2006 in Iraq. Specialist McGinnis was a native son of Knox, Pennsylvania.

While on patrol in eastern Baghdad on December 4, 2006, an unidentified insurgent positioned on a nearby rooftop threw a grenade into a Humvee carrying McGinnis and other troops. Specialist McGinnis threw his body on top of the grenade, absorbing all the fragments of the grenade with his own body and saving the lives of his fellow soldiers. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by President George W. Bush in 2008.

Mr. Speaker, another such hero, Foster Joseph Sayers, is from my hometown of Howard, Pennsylvania. He received the Medal of Honor for acts of bravery near Thionville, France, on November 12, 1944.

During an attack on strong hostile forces entrenched on a hill, he fearlessly ran up the steep approach towards his objective and then set up a machine gun 20 yards from the enemy. Realizing it would be necessary to attract full attention of the enemy while his company crossed an open area and flanked the enemy, he picked up the gun, charged through withering machine-gun and rifle fire to the very edge of the emplacement. He killed 12 German soldiers with devastating close-range fire.

He took up a position behind a log and engaged the hostile enemy from the flank in an heroic attempt to distract their attention while his comrades obtained their objective at the crest of the hill. He was killed by the very heavy concentration of return fire, but his fearless assault enabled his company to sweep the hill with minimum casualties, killing or capturing every enemy soldier on it.

Private First Class Sayers' indomitable fighting spirit, aggressiveness, and supreme devotion to duty live on as an example of the highest traditions of the military service for which he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Another heroic Medal of Honor recipient from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District is Private First Class Melvin L. Brown. Private First Class Brown earned the Medal of Honor for his bravery in the Korean war.

During an attack on his platoon's perimeter of defense, Private First Class Brown took his position on a retaining wall approximately 50 feet high. The enemy, superior in number, started climbing the wall just as Brown's last round of ammunition was expended, and he was wounded by enemy fire. His citation said: "Realizing the vital necessity for holding and without concern for his personal safety, though wounded and without his rifle, Brown continued to throw his few remaining hand grenades into the enemy, causing several casualties with each grenade. When his supply of grenades was depleted, his comrades from nearby foxholes commenced throwing grenades towards his position. On several occasions, the grenades were thrown short of his position. When this would occur, Brown would leave his position and retrieve the grenades, exposing himself to enemy rifle and machine-gun fire."

The enemy continued their climb, and Brown was able to knock 10 to 12 enemy troops from the wall, which served as an inspiration to his comrades and delayed the attack and enabled his platoon to repel the enemy. Brown was seriously injured and then died during that action.

Heroic acts for Pennsylvanians during times of war go back to the Civil War. The Medal of Honor, established by joint resolution of Congress on the 12th of July 1862, is awarded in the name of Congress to a person who, while a member of the armed services, distinguishes himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty.

A large percentage of Medal of Honor recipients during this time were actually awarded for action involving flags. One such Medal of Honor recipient from my hometown was Civil War Corporal Franklin Hogan, a member of Company A, Pennsylvania 45th Infantry. His citation was awarded on October 1, 1864, for the capture of the battle flag of the 6th Virginia Infantry.

Mr. Speaker, there are more Medal of Honor recipients from Pennsylvania's